

# NEWS *from the National Wildlife Refuge System*

September 6, 1996 Kevin Kilcullen 703-358-2029

## **FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE CELEBRATES 30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT**

Migratory birds . . . wetlands . . . natural habitats. Many people associate these with the National Wildlife Refuge System. But did you know that the Fish and Wildlife Service also manages:

- o The area encompassing the last battlefield of the Civil War?
- o Sites visited by the Lewis and Clark Expedition?
- o A visitor center exhibiting the entire cargo of a steamboat that sank in the Missouri River in 1865?
- o The remains of Civilian Conservation Corps camps?
- o Many of the earliest archaeological sites in North America?

October 15, 1996, marks the 30th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the legislative centerpiece of our Nation's efforts to protect, study, and commemorate its past.

Since its enactment, the Fish and Wildlife Service has identified more than 9,000 archaeological and historic sites on national wildlife refuges, many of which are interpreted for visitors to learn more about our heritage. The act has become a significant catalyst for encouraging greater cooperation among Federal agencies, local governments, Native Americans, and other organizations interested in preserving community identities and traditions.

As part of National Wildlife Refuge Week, scheduled for October 5-13, the Fish and Wildlife Service invites you to visit national wildlife refuges to experience the out-of-doors and also to learn more about our country's rich prehistory and history. Refuges where visitors can experience our past include:

**DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge** in Missouri Valley, Iowa, where the entire cargo of the steamboat *Bertrand* has been preserved and is on display. The *Bertrand's* cargo was on its way to the mining towns of Montana when the boat hit a snag in the Missouri River and sank April 1, 1865. Recovered objects reflect the everyday life of 19th-Century Americans living on the frontier--lamps, clothing, equipment, food stuffs, liquor, cooking utensils, and games.

**Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge** in Crossett, Arkansas, where visitors can see the remains of prehistoric temple mounds, ceremonial plazas, and villages. The refuge's visitor center contains exhibits interpreting 5,000 years of human occupation of the region by Native Americans.



**AMERICA'S NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES...**  
*where wildlife comes naturally!*

**Kenai National Wildlife Refuge** in Soldotna, Alaska, which manages one of the most unique and complex prehistoric sites in the state, the Sqilantnu Archaeological District located at the confluence of the Russian and Kenai rivers near the town of Cooper Landing. Archaeological evidence indicates that the site has been continually occupied for nearly 8,000 years and was a meeting place for Eskimo and Indian peoples during the late prehistoric period. The nearby "Footprints" Visitor Center managed by the Kenaitze Indian Tribe provides visitors with interpretive materials on the prehistory of the area.

**Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge** in Smyrna, Delaware, where visitors can see the Queen Anne Period Allee House built circa 1753. The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accessible via the refuge's auto tour route.

**Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge** in McAllen, Texas, which protects a large portion of the Palmetto Ranch Battlefield, the last engagement of the Civil War fought in May 1865, almost one month after General Lee's surrender. The battle involved various Union and Confederate detachments including Native American, African-American, and Hispanic-American troops. Reports of the battle indicate that Imperial Mexican forces may also have been involved in the fighting.

**Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge** in Ridgefield, Washington, will host the third annual Cathlapotle Open House on October 5 in the town's community center. The Cathlapotle Indian Village was visited by the Lewis and Clark Expedition on its journey to the Pacific Ocean. Visitors will be able to learn about archaeological materials recovered from the site, Chinook Tribal Culture, the refuge's wildlife and plant resources, and enjoy hands-on activities as part of National Wildlife Refuge Week events.

**Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge** in Green River, Wyoming. The refuge contains numerous sites associated with the Oregon and Mormon trails, a Pony Express station, and early historic homesteads and trading posts. This stretch of the Green River and adjacent landscapes have remained virtually unchanged from those experienced by westward-bound travelers during the mid-19th century.

**Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge** in Glenwood, Washington, where the Whitcomb-Cole Log House has been restored and opened to visitors. The late 19th-Century house, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is situated near the refuge's headquarters. An open house to celebrate its restoration is scheduled for October 6, 1996, as part of National Wildlife Refuge Week festivities.

Want to know more about your National Wildlife Refuges or get involved? Call 1-800-344-WILD; visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service home page at <http://www.fws.gov> and click on National Wildlife Refuge System; or better yet, visit some of your 500-plus national wildlife refuges across the country!

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